



From the Editor

Since the last issue of this publication, we have received donations from a number of benefactors to help the elderly in Xingtai, Hebei Province. We want to thank you for your kindness on behalf of these needy old folks. In this issue, we will introduce several successful programmes on the Mainland, and call on your support for the needs of a kindergarten in Hebei Province. We pray and await your generous response.

Shaanxi Migrant Children Discover Paradise in a Sea of Books

Many migrant workers live in Fu-tuo, a village in Xian, Shaanxi with their families and it is estimated that there are more than ten thousand children among them. The schools they attend are poorly equipped, and lack reading materials and educational resources. The parents, who are poorly educated, do not have the knowledge or the ability to help the children in after class activities.

In May 2015, with assistance from Caritas-HK, the Shaanxi Ren-ai Children Support Centre opened up a 'Garden of Joy of Reading' for the Children in Fu-tuo. It serves as the platform for innovative activities such as: getting the children interested in reading and drawing; encouraging them to read together as a group; assisting them in homework. And of course, the children can borrow books to take home to read.



Promoting community support for migrant children



Story telling sessions

Quite a number of mothers became volunteers and were trained, along with university students who volunteered to help with the promotion of activities such as 'child protection', 'health and hygiene'. The children are encouraged to think, to be inquisitive, and to take the initiative to solve problems. In a nutshell, the centre is focused on activities that help the children to grow up in a healthy environment.



After two years of operation, there are now over 280 migrant children as registered members, and they have participated more than 16,000 times in activities organized by the centre. Through these activities, the children have become livelier, more open-minded, more innovative, and more self-confident. They have also achieved better grades in school. The programme is not only appreciated by the parents, it is also highly regarded by the government.



Build-up Ability • Broaden Horizon • Improve Services

For many nuns on the Mainland who work to provide social services, they do this work with a heavy dose of love, a desire to glorify God, and a wish to help the needy. They work hard to serve the sick, the poor, widows and widowers, and the handicapped. They are not afraid of taking on difficult tasks, and they don't mind taking up jobs that are despised by most. They are wholeheartedly dedicated to serving people in need.

However, with all the rapid development in the country, there is a lot of pressure for people involved in social services to keep up the pace. They have to become more professional, to specialize, and to innovate. There is the need to understand and to have a good grasp of government policies. Good intentions alone are no longer sufficient. Realizing the challenges the sisters have to deal with, the Mainland Service Desk of Caritas-HK conducted a series of short courses to address this issue between 2013 and 2015. Ten congregations involved in a variety of social services from across the country were invited to attend training classes. Each congregation sent three participants and a total of 30 persons attended the training.



A photo taken after class in Yunnan



The final phase of the course was held in Guangzhou



Group discussion

All the course participants had been working in rural areas from across the country, and were from diverse backgrounds. There were kindergarten teachers, heads of old folks' homes, directors of orphanages, managers of recuperation centres and social service centres. The sessions were conducted in different provinces. The course contents include: fundamentals of project management; theories on participation and development; logical framework; the media and public welfare; basic knowledge of fund raising for social services; and visits to social service centres. Participants were assigned to programmes that would take them to different provinces to practice baseline studies. The participants overwhelmingly feel that the course opened their eyes and broadened their horizons. Below are some of their reflections and comments:



Group discussion

Class presentation



Prior to this course, we used to do what we thought was needed in the communities we served. We now have learned the importance of sustainable development. Not only that we need to continuously improve and develop, we also need to influence the communities we serve to continuously look for improvement. This is the only way to guarantee sustainable results for our work.

We used to be quite 'simplistic' in our thinking. The course has broadened our vision - we now know we need to pay attention to what is happening around us, and think from different angles. We also learned the importance of interacting with the government.



Practising counselling skills during class

This training is very necessary. It walked us through step by the step from the collection of information to how to do our job effectively. Prior to this training we only thought of handling tasks that came our way. Now we know we need to look proactively to find out what other needs there are in the communities we serve.

'Start with the goal in mind' is an eye-opening concept for me. Now I know the importance of setting our goals before starting a programme. Our congregation used to do anything and everything that came our way. It was very tiring. This course taught us we need to have a clear mission in mind. We also need to have timely reviews of our programmes. I hope we can put what we learn into practice.

Visit to a migrant family



Visiting a migrant children centre in Xi'an

This course instilled in me many new concepts, in particular about the ways to work with the communities we serve. The government wants us to contribute to the wellbeing of the society. We also need to take account of the charisma of our congregation.

After the courses were complete, each congregation that participated was asked to develop a plan of their services, and a five year plan. These plans were reviewed, critiqued, and improved by the instructors. Two of these plans received funding so their programmes could be implemented. All of the participants benefited from the training and will use the newly acquired knowledge in future programmes.



Attending the Charity Day in Guangzhou

Call from Afar ...



Item no : 5201

Dear Responsible Person of Caritas Hong Kong,

I am the principle of the Little Angels Kindergarten in Dong-lu township, Hebei Province. Our school is government sanctioned. The kindergarten is situated on two plots of land with a total area of 2,114 square meters. Right now we have seven classes, each with 30 students, for a total of 210 children in the school.

We started our kindergarten in 2009 when there was only one kindergarten run by the government serving an area with a population of 18,000. A typical family in Dong-lu has three to five children, and there were about 900 children who had to be taken care of. The opening of Little Angels helped to alleviate the problem to some extent.

All along, the Little Angels has enjoyed good ratings from the villagers. Our biggest headache however is the lack of space. The kindergarten is currently housed in a building on loan from a parishioner, and with 210 students it is crammed to the uppermost limit of students that it can hold. We have given up implementing new teaching methods that require the use of audio-visual aids because there is no space for such equipment. As a result, some parents stopped sending their children to our school, opting for other kindergartens in the area.

With help from parishioners, we have managed to build a new building with a floor space of 4,700 square meters, which will accommodate 300 students. Building this new facility exhausted funds we had raised from many sources. The parishioners are willing to lend us the money for the refurbishing and final touches of the building, but we are still short of about RMB330,000 (about HK\$368,735) to purchase the necessary equipment. Our hope is for the children to be able to move into the new premises in September. In our search for help, our parish priest recommended that we appeal to you for assistance. We pray that your organization will grant us the support so that we can improve our service to the children.



Front door of the kindergarten



New kindergarten under construction

	Item	\$/Unit(Y)	Amt.(Y)
1	Desktop computer	3,500 x 8	28,000
2	Notebook computer	4,000 x 1	4,000
3	Colour printer	2,750 x 1	2,750
4	Photocopier	3,550 x 1	3,550
5	Electronic Whiteboard	5,500 x 6	33,000
6	TV	3,660 x 1	3,660
7	Projector	5,500 x 5	27,500
8	Projector screen	550 x 1	550
9	Camera	2,750 x 1	2,750
10	Electronic piano	8,500 x 1	8,500
11	Electronic organ	1,900 x 6	11,400
12	Large size slide set	10,000 x 1	10,000
13	Trampoline	3,900 x 1	3,900
14	Cabinet for toys	250 x 20	5,000
15	Cabinet for backpacks	300 x 8	2,400
16	Air conditioner	5,500 x 8	44,000
17	Conference table	2,800 x 1	2,800
18	Door	480 x 81	38,880
19	Window	921 x 90	82,890
20	Electronic Water boiler	4,200 x 2	8,400
21	Food warmer	300 x 8	2,400
Total			326,330



Students crammed in class

Sister Wang
15 Feb 2017

Looking forward to
your response

For enquiry, please call on 35892259 or 35892500, or leave your message at mainland@caritas.org.hk. To show your care, you may write a crossed cheque payable to "Caritas-Hong Kong" and send it to: Mainland Service Desk, Room 505, Caritas House, 2, Caine Road, Central, Hong Kong. Please write down the item no. / purpose of the cheque and your contact information on the back.